

**Next Generation “Strengthening Our Niche” Work-Group  
Meeting Notes of May 4, 2009**

**Present**

Will Andresen, Tom Bergman, Chris Botkin, Steve Frank, John Garske, Charlene Herron-Jordon, Holly Jennings, Kelly Klein, Gemma Lamb, Jim Maki, Serena Mershon-Lohkamp, Lily Palmer, Dan Petersen, Toni Sendra, Charlie Supercynski, Dick Swanson

**Introductions & Overview**

Will Andresen handed out a flier, “Gogebic Range ‘Next Generation’ Initiative: Retaining and Attracting Young People. He briefly reminded the workgroup that our primary purpose is to strengthen our niche in a way that will be inviting to young adults so they will choose to make our area their home. To this end the workgroup has two purposes:

- a. Work with the two counties, communities, and other entities to map a proposed two-county non-motorized, multi-use trail system to be used to begin discussion and action towards the development of the regional trail system.
- b. Enhance the awareness of the economic importance of strengthening the niche to local decision makers to encourage their support of project activities.

The group thanked John Garske, Coleman Engineering, for supplying the pizza and soda for the day’s meeting.

**Workgroup Leadership**

Due to a recent back surgery, Clyde Eilo has resigned. Serena Mershon-Lohkamp agreed to take on the leadership role, which includes organizing and facilitating the meetings, keeping the meeting minutes, and making the semi-annual “big group” updates.

**Regional Trail Mapping**

John Garske and Jim Maki presented two maps to the group that spanned Montreal/Hurley to Wakefield and included some current amenities such as schools, parks, a few historic sites, cross country ski trails, the proposed MMHP, and two old railroad lines (Chicago-Northwestern – current snowmobile trail, and Canadian National).

The subsequent discussion centered on two topics: (a) possible routes and (b) potential sites of interest to be included.

(a) With regard to routes, two areas were proposed:

- John Garske indicated the area south of US 2 that includes the old railways and Old US 2 had potential. The group agreed that the area around Old US 2 offered interesting landscape and historical connections. It was suggested that Old 2 be looked at for potential trailheads, especially at historical sites, to connect to the nonmotorized trail.
- Char Herron-Jordan relayed that she has used a route beginning at Margaret St. in Ironwood that follows the ridge line through Wolverine and Powderhorn to the Bessemer Ridge, and has the potential to connect to Whitecap. She indicated that much of the land is privately owned, and owners have previously given permission for non-motorized use. Section 12 Rd could be a potential access point from the airport. The group agreed that this area should be mapped out to consider as well.

(b) Many historical sites spanning from mining sites to schools to Native American points of interest were brought up. It was suggested that since the trail cannot include all sites, that sites be grouped into “themes” for consideration.

### **Next Steps**

- ➔ A “Trail Routes” subgroup, consisting of John Garske and Jim Maki, will take the information from the meeting and put it on paper. At the next meeting they will present a map(s) with the possibilities for the main trail artery north and south of US 2. Current motorized routes should be included to compare land use areas. Mercer will work on their own regional trail system. Possible links will be considered in the future.

Anyone that would like to provide input can contact John at [jrgarske@coleman-engineering.com](mailto:jrgarske@coleman-engineering.com) or Jim at [jbmaki@gogebic.org](mailto:jbmaki@gogebic.org).

- ➔ A “Historical Sites” subgroup, consisting of Steve Frank and Charlie Supercynski, will take the suggestions from the meeting and combine it with currently available information/maps on the topic. At the next meeting they will present maps of potential sites of interested based on themes. Anyone that would like to provide input can contact Steve at [corbae@chartermi.net](mailto:corbae@chartermi.net) or Charlie at [supercynski@gmail.com](mailto:supercynski@gmail.com).

### **Strengthening the Niche to Local Decision Makers**

- Steve Frank suggested that we need to gather hard data about the economic impact of both motorized and nonmotorized sports on our community as well as others.
  - ➔ As no specific person was appointed to do this, individual workgroup members are asked to find relevant data and bring to the next meeting.
- Lily Palmer had petitions for Ironwood and Gogebic Range residents to sign in support of the Miners Memorial Heritage Park. The motorized sporting groups are starting to publically express opposition to the creation of a designated non-motorized trail system in the area proposed.
- Serena Mershon-Lohkamp informed the group that the Gogebic County Land Use Plan is nearing completion and will be available for public review in the next few months. It is important for this plan to encompass all potential future projects for the purposes of state and federal funding. Everyone is encouraged to review this document when available and provide input before the final draft is voted on.

### **Next Meeting**

Monday, June 1, 4:00pm, Board Room of the Iron County Courthouse